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less than an absolute predetermined period of time and based on whether the difference between the current date and the digital signature private key lifetime end date (t1) is less than a selectable predetermined percentage of a total duration of a digital signature private key lifetime.

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19. (Once amended) The system of claim 14 further comprising:

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means for determining a digital signature private key lifetime end date and a digital signature certificate creation date upon a user login to the public key system;

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client means for initiating a digital signature key pair update request based on whether a difference between a current date and the digital signature private key lifetime end date (t1) is less than an absolute predetermined period of time and based on whether the difference between the current date and the digital signature private key lifetime end date (t1) is less than a selectable predetermined percentage of a total duration of a digital signature private key lifetime.

25. The storage medium of claim 21 wherein the stored program further facilitates the steps of:

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determining a digital signature private key lifetime end date and a digital signature certificate creation date upon a user login to the public key system;

initiating, by a client unit, a digital signature key pair update request based on whether a difference between a current date and the digital signature private key lifetime end date (t1) is less than an absolute predetermined period of time and based on whether the difference between the current date and the digital signature private key lifetime end date (t1) is less than a selectable predetermined percentage of a total duration of a digital signature private key lifetime.

Please add the following new claims:

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27. (New) The method of Claim 5 wherein the selectable predetermined percentage of a total duration of a digital signature private key lifetime includes a selectable period of time.

28. (New) The system of Claim 19 wherein the selectable predetermined percentage of a total duration of a digital signature private key lifetime includes a selectable period of time.

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29. (New) The storage medium of Claim 25 wherein the selectable predetermined percentage of a total duration of a digital signature private key lifetime includes a selectable period of time.
